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Abstract

A method of characterizing surface structures which comprises

- (I) using a chemically curable impression material to take an impression of at least one site
 - (I.1) of the undamaged surface of an article,
 - (I.2) of a surface of an article damaged by mechanical and/or chemical exposure and/or by exposure to radiation and/or heat, and/or
 - (I.3) of a surface of a test specimen mounted on the surface of an article, said test specimen surface being damaged by mechanical and/or chemical exposure and/or by exposure to radiation and/or heat,
- (II) curing the impression material to produce a negative of the damage pattern, and
- (III) using image analysis to determine the extent (%) of the surface structures and/or the extent (%) of the surface damage within the damage pattern on the basis of light-microscope pictures of the negative;

and also the use of the method for the preparation, modification and/or development of new and/or existing materials.